the wise having realised Him as the One Supreme God in all things moving or stationary, become immortal, when they depart from this world." The Rishis felt the reality of God so vividly and deeply that the light of such knowledge filled their whole life and brightened their earthly journey. In other words, the consciousness of God as the Truth of truths, as All-in-all, coloured and permeated all other forms of their consciousness, outer and inner, so that they actually lived, moved, breathed and had their being in Him. Likewise, the love of God instead of visiting them occasionally as a sentiment or emotion became their over-mastering passion and guiding impulse of life. According to them, life in God through all occurrences is a pilgrimage which begins as soon as the eye sees light and never ends though we pass through the dark veil.

What are the *sadhanas* (means) prescribed by the Rishis for the practical realisation of the consciousness and love of God? Says Rishi Yajnavalkya to his wife Maitreyi in

the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad : '' *Verily, the Self is to be seen, to be heard, to be perceived, 0 Maitreyi | When we see, hear, perceive and know the Self, then all this is known."*

This verse forms the basis of the four stages of Upanishadic spiritual culture known to the Vedantists as *Sravana, Manana, Nididhyasana* and *Darsana.* In commenting upon this passage, Sankara says that seeing the self *(darsana)* is the end, and hearing *(sravana),* thinking *(manana)* and meditating *[nididhyasana)* are the means to that end. Accordingly, *darsana* (seeing) though mentioned first by the Rishi^ really comes last. It is relatively the *sidhi* (fruition) and the others are *sadhanas.*

The first stage *sravana* consists in the devout study of sacred literature, conversation on spiritual subjects with fellow pilgrims on the path of the higher life, and listening to the inspired words of experienced spiritual teachers. But such study or listening to religious exhortations counts for